

BOARD OF PARK COMMISSIONERS**REGULAR MEETING****Monday, March 10, 2003**

Present: June Bailey, Colleen Craig, Glen Dey, Janet Miller, M.S. Mitchell, and Trix Niernberger

Absent: Joe Todd

Also Present: Roger Savage, O.J. Brock, Tom Creel, and Bill Barber, Military Order of the Purple Heart (MOPH); Mike North, - Law Department; and Doug Kupper and Maryann Crockett (staff)

President Bailey called the meeting to order at approximately 3:35 p.m. The minutes of the Regular Meeting of February 10, 2003, were reviewed and approved. Niernberger noted a correction to Kay Johnson's title.

1. **Purple Heart Memorial – Veteran's Memorial Park.** Director Kupper commented that according to the master site plan for Veteran's Memorial Park, the Park could accommodate two more memorials. Roger Savage from the Military Order of the Purple Heart (MOPH) introduced himself and provided board members a handout, which was the proposal for the Purple Heart Memorial at Veteran's Memorial Park.

Mr. Savage stated that the MOPH was the only congressionally chartered veterans organization exclusively for combat wounded veterans. He said the Wichita Area Chapter of the organization was called the "Richard E. Cowan Chapter 558" and gave a brief history of the local hero who was an alumnus of North High School and Friends University and recipient of the Medal of Honor and Purple Heart posthumously for his actions on December 28, 1944, at Krinkelter Wald, Belgium. Mr. Savage reviewed the proposal, which included an architectural rendering and picture of the memorial; information on site compatibility; rendering of the memorial in the park; financial information; contact information and appendices.

Mr. Savage concluded the presentation by stating that the group felt the memorial was appropriate to the park setting and added that the MOPH would be responsible for upkeep of the memorial.

On motion by Mitchell, second by Dey, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED that staff assist the MOPH with establishing the Military Order of the Purple Heart (MOPH) memorial in Veteran's Memorial Park.

2. **Acceptance of Acreage in Reserve A. Gray's 5th Addition.** Director Kupper reported that Billy Gray had offered to donate approximately 7 acres along the west edge of the Big Ditch/Cowskin Floodway near 44th St. South to the City for use as public park and open space. He added that there was also a possibility of the City acquiring an additional 24.5 acres along the floodway in the future. President Bailey asked about the time frame. Director Kupper responded that the transaction would probably be completed within the next five years.

Since the City Council accepted the donation at the March 4, 2003, City Council meeting, it was the general consensus of the Board to receive and file the information on the acreage.

3. **Council Action/Items:**

- **Naming of Parks** – Director Kupper reported the City Council had appointed the Park Board as the on-going official committee to make recommendations to them concerning the naming of public parks.
- **Cornejo Correspondence** – Director Kupper reported that the board's recommendation on the Cornejo construction and demolition landfill was scheduled to go to the City Council on Tuesday, March 18, 2003. Mitchell commented that the Kansas Department of Health and Environment (KDHE) was scheduled to hold a public hearing on the matter on Wednesday, March 12, 2003, at 6:00 p.m. at the County Extension Center at 21st and Ridge. He added that agencies and individuals had until March 21, 2003, to submit written opinions/information. He asked if the Park Board President or another board member could attend the KDHE meeting and speak in support of granting the extension for the construction and demolition landfill. Director Kupper responded that since the Park Board was an advisory board to the City Council, he needed to check with the Law Department on that question.

[At the end of the meeting, Mike North from the Law Department advised that board members could attend the KDHE hearing as private citizens and/or Park Board members and discuss their recommendation to the City Council; however, he said they could in no way represent the City Council. President Bailey asked if they could provide KDHE a copy of the Park Board's letter to the City Council concerning the issue. North advised against doing that since the correspondence had not been received and reviewed by the City Council.]

4. **Chemical Free Parks – suggested trial areas.** Director Kupper referred board members to a handout, which was a draft copy of "Pesticide Free/Limited Use Pesticide Parks by City Council District". He commented that the pesticide free parks were in bold face type. Board members briefly reviewed the item.

On motion by Niernberger, second by Miller, IT WAS UNANIMOUSLY VOTED that the draft list of "Pesticide Free/Limited Use Pesticide Park by City Council District" be approved.

5. **Budget Cut Review.** Director Kupper stated that he had not provided the Board specifics on budget cuts prior to City Council review and approval of staff recommendations. He said numerous ideas were discussed concerning how to achieve proposed savings. He specifically referenced publicity regarding the staff cut at the Kansas Wildlife Exhibit (KWE).

Niernberger asked if Director Kupper could provide specifics on proposed budget cuts. Director Kupper made the following comments: the department needed to generate \$250,000 in new revenues; hiring for vacant positions had been deferred for the remainder of the year; one superintendent position had been cut; a grinder would be purchased for wood recycling; the temperature of the Century II facility would be adjusted; class fees at City Arts would be increased; the Boathouse budget would be adjusted; swimming pool hours and days of operation would be

adjusted (there was brief discussion concerning this proposal and how it would be advertised); and the \$318,000 maintenance budget increase would be given back to the general fund.

Niernberger commented that the special assessment for improvements to the College Hill swimming pool would be sent out this year. She suggested that staff attend a neighborhood meeting to prepare residents for the impact fee and explain its relevance to current budget issues. Miller asked what were the annual operating expenses of the KWE? Director Kupper commented that the attendant's salary was approximately \$25,000.00; however, other expenses were difficult to determine since some of the lights on streets surrounding the park were included on the park electrical meter.

6. **Discussion of Project Bids by Item for Riverside Park.** Director Kupper referred board members to a handout of the City's Web Page of the bids for the project. He also provided Mitchell the project bid book for his review. There was discussion regarding the KWE and whether it was suitable to continue to house animals at Riverside Park or if another location would be more appropriate for an exhibit that size. There was also discussion concerning operational costs of the exhibit, which staff estimated to be between \$150,000 and \$160,000 annually, plus utilities.
7. **Homeland Security Facility.** Director Kupper referred board members to Council Proceedings dated March 4, 2003, re: Homeland Defense Readiness Center and a map of Grove Park and the adjacent K-96 Lake area. He explained that the Kansas National Guard, in conjunction with the City, County and Marine Reserve were proposing to build a new Homeland Defense Readiness Center on approximately 27 acres adjacent to K-96 Lake (west of Hillside and south of K-96 Highway). He said part of the proposal included use of the building for community purposes and reversion of the existing National Guard Armory at West Douglas to the City.

Director Kupper explained that because the land was purchased with Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, the land could not be transferred to the National Guard until the fair market value of the land, appraised at \$185,000, was repayed to the CDBG Program. He said the City had agreed to do this by transferring \$185,000 from the 2003 general fund street repair budget into the 2002-2003 CDBG street repair program.

Director Kupper commented that another advantage of the proposed land use by the Guard was the possible extension of New York Street for better access to K-96 Lake and the improvement of 27th Street to the bridge at I-135.

Dey said he was concerned that although Grove Park and adjacent K-96 were carried on land inventory as community park space, how much of the acreage had specifically been zoned or designated for park and/or open space use? He asked about the park boundaries and commented that he felt park boundaries needed to be firmly established. He said he was concerned that land not officially designated for park use could be subject to land use proposals and other deals from numerous agencies, organizations, developers and private individuals. He commented that land purchases in the area were intended for development of a community park consisting of at least 125 acres. He added that he did not think the parcels on the map came close to totaling 125 acres. The board requested that total acreage of the area be verified by the next meeting.

There was discussion concerning various parcels of land in and around Grove Park, the railroad tracks, and K-96 Lake.

8. **Director's Update.** Director Kupper reported briefly on the following items:

- Tough Man Competition. Commented that the Board may be asked to provide recommendations and review applications on these competitions in the future.
- Colvin Recreation Center. Reported that there will be no Summer of Discovery (SOD) Program offered at Colvin Recreation Center this year.
- Maintenance. Responding to a question, reported that Tim Martz had been appointed superintendent of the Maintenance Division.

There being no further business, the meeting adjourned at approximately 5:25 p.m.

June Bailey, President

ATTEST:

Maryann Crockett, Clerk
Recording Secretary